

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 1, 5-7 and 9-14 and 18 are presently pending, with claims 2 - 4, 8 and 15-17 having been previously canceled without prejudice or disclaimer

Claims 1, 5, 14 and 18 are amended without the introduction of new matter.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that the claims as understood patentably distinguish over the known prior art.

III. Objection to the Specification

The Examiner indicates that the substitute specification filed on May 23, 2007 fails to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121, and has not been entered. Specifically, the Examiner objects to the specification with respect to various informalities. The also Examiner continues to object to the substitute specification filed on March 14, 2006, which was entered, as containing new matter.

A revised substitute specification is included with the present response, in both "marked-up" and "clean" versions. It is believed that this substitute specification addresses each of the objections raised, for example, in paragraphs 1. - 6. of the present Office Action.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the revised substitute specification be entered, and that the objections to the specification be withdrawn.

IV. Objections to the Claims

Claims 5, 14, and 18 are objected to because of various informalities. Applicants thank the Examiner for suggesting various amendments to address the informalities, and amend claims 5, 14, and 18 accordingly.

Therefore, Applicants and respectfully request that the objections to claims 5, 14 and 18 be withdrawn.

V. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1, 5 - 7, 9 - 14 and 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner finds in claims 1 and 14 that the unqualified term "bonded" is unclear with regard to whether a reference is being made to "direct" bonding, "indirect" bonding or both. The Examiner also finds that the term "elongated convex area formed along a longitudinal direction of the surface sheet of the main body" is unclear, as it thereby becomes unclear whether sheets of the main body enclose the absorber because it is further claimed that an end of the convex area forms a finger insertion opening.

Applicants amend claims 1 and 14 to a) further qualify the term "bonded" to recite "directly bonded," and b) to clarify that the elongated convex area is formed "along a longitudinal direction

of the main sheet body." Accordingly, Applicants submit that the meanings of claims 1 and 14 are respectively clear.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1, 5 - 7, 9 - 14 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below once he has reviewed the proposed amendment if the Examiner believes any issue can be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments: "Clean" and "Marked-Up" copies of substitute specification